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MASSACHUSETTS GOVERNOR'S ALLIANCE --- AGAINST DRUGS

FIVE YEAR PLAN

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
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THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

STATE HOUSE • BOSTON 02133

MICHAEL S. DUKAKIS
GOVERNOR

THE GOVERNOR'S ALLIANCE AGAINST DRUGS

FIVE YEAR PLAN

Introduction

The Governor's Alliance Against Drugs is about people. It starts with the teenagers who in 1984 responded to the most comprehensive Massachusetts survey of substance abuse among high school students and told us not only that six out of every ten had used drugs, but that one out of every four -- almost one out of every three -- had begun using drugs at the age of twelve or younger. The Alliance is also about the eighteen courageous school superintendents who stood with Governor Dukakis in December, 1984 when we opened a second front in our all-out war on drugs. At first, they alone responded to the alarm summoning to action those prepared to confront openly the drug problem in their own communities.

What is most significant about the two years since then is not so much what we have achieved as what we have learned. Our experience gives us greater confidence about what we must do to have drug-free schools and about our ability to achieve that goal. No single approach can prevent drug abuse. Rather, it requires a constellation of initiatives, activities and programs, each one reinforcing the other and promoting the values of a drug-free lifestyle.

Our goal must be to deliver to each and every child in the Commonwealth the message to say no to drugs. That message must have many different voices and must be heard not only in the home and in the classroom, but in the playground, on the playing fields and throughout the community. Each child must also be educated to know how to say no to drugs. And we must create for all children the support systems that will give them the strength to say no. Only with this combination can we generate a counterforce to the constant peer pressure to abuse drugs and alcohol as though it were some sort of "rite of passage". Only through a sustained, long-term commitment to such an effort can we hope, in time, to reverse the tide of that peer pressure so that young people are not only the main target of this campaign but become our most effective weapon as well.

This is why it is important, five years from now, that we decide where we want to be by the 1990-1991 school year. By setting measurable goals, we challenge ourselves to marshal the resources needed to get the job done. It is also time to ensure vigorous monitoring of the impact of the Alliance, to measure our progress and the distance we have still to travel.

THE ALLIANCE FIVE-YEAR PLAN

K-12 CURRICULUM

Each child must be taught both why and how to say no to drugs. That education should begin as early as possible, before other attitudes can take root, and must be continued and updated throughout the child's formative years to ensure that the first impression remains a lasting one. The Alliance focuses on the schools as the primary, though not exclusive, vehicle for delivering these lessons for a lifetime. Not only does a child spend more time in school than anywhere other than the home, but a child's teachers and classmates are among the most important influences in shaping a child's values.

Today, less than a fourth of all the schools in the Commonwealth have a drug and alcohol abuse prevention curriculum that starts as early as kindergarten, that changes to meet a youngster's changing needs, and that continues straight through to twelfth grade. As of today, our goal is to have such a comprehensive curriculum in place in every grade in every school of the Commonwealth by 1990 .

TEACHER TRAINING

Our children go to school to prepare for the future. But drugs present the greatest threat to both their schooling and their future. That is why the Alliance relies principally on teachers themselves to deliver the in-school instruction. This underscores the fact that teaching youngsters to avoid drugs and to cope with the pressures of growing up is no less fundamental to the educational process than teaching literacy skills and the duties of citizenship. In fact, one Massachusetts school district has used a state grant to pioneer a substance abuse curriculum that is not offered separately as a health education subject, but is woven into and made part and parcel of mainstream courses such as history, literature, social studies and the natural sciences. Whatever curriculum is employed, it is also important that knowledgeable adults be available to youngsters outside of the classroom, where the lessons learned in the classroom are put to the test.



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That is why the Alliance places so much emphasis on teacher training. So far, less than 25% of all Massachusetts school districts have sent teachers to receive special substance abuse detection and prevention training. Our goal is to double that figure by 1988 and by 1990 to have completed the teacher training necessary to support K-12 curricula in every school.

ACTIVE COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS

The message a child hears in school must be echoed throughout the community. That is why the Alliance has called upon each city and town to establish a local advisory council as diverse as the statewide Alliance itself, made up of educators and coaches, elected officials, religious and business leaders, media representatives, parents and students themselves. They alone can tailor a total prevention program best suited to meet their community's needs and designed to make the most of local resources and talents. Council-sponsored activities can be as varied as special drug-free policies or competitions for school sports teams or local athletic leagues; a bumper-sticker awareness campaign, sponsored by the chamber of commerce, for families who have signed a compact to communicate about drugs; parent training programs; or the establishment of a drug and alcohol-free weekend social center for teens.

Over the past two years, the Alliance has grown from the original 18 cities and towns to over 220 communities displaying different levels of involvement. By 1988, we plan to have enlisted in the Alliance every Massachusetts community and to have an active advisory council in each one meeting at least four times a year.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY CODES

Every student and every parent must understand that drug or alcohol use, possession, or distribution in or around school will not be tolerated. That is why one of the first missions of a community advisory council should be to review or draft school disciplinary codes to ensure that they include a clear and escalating set of sanctions for substance abuse violations. Community involvement in the development of these rules and support for their enforcement is vital to their credibility. It is equally important that all school personnel, from the principal to the custodian, know that they are expected to handle drug-related incidents head on and that they will be supported by their superiors as well as the community at large for taking action. In the months and years ahead, the Alliance will work closely with local councils to ensure that every school has a well-publicized disciplinary code by 1988.

PEER PROGRAMS

Youngsters listen to and learn from one another as much as from their parents or teachers. Therein lies both our challenge and our opportunity. Today, peer pressure is a major factor in, if not a leading cause of, substance abuse. Destructive as it is in getting youngsters to "turn on" with drugs, peer pressure can be just as constructive in getting them to turn down drugs and to turn in pushers. This is precisely the objective of student assistance, peer education, peer counseling and peer leadership programs and that is why we will work with communities to have peer programs operating in every school in every city and town by 1990.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING

School and police officials can and must cooperate if they hope to keep drugs out of the schools. But they cannot work well together unless each appreciates the other's primary mission of education and crime prevention. This is why it is so important that each school superintendent and police chief execute a written memorandum of understanding committing their respective institutions to a close working relationship based on trust and mutual respect and to the sharing of information each of them needs to get their job done. District Attorneys can also be valuable members of such a partnership, especially in those counties with juvenile diversion programs.

Today, roughly 80 Alliance communities have signed a memorandum of understanding and, with the help of their District Attorneys, two counties are nearing complete coverage. By 1989, our goal is to have such agreements in place in every community in the state.

TREATMENT PROGRAMS

As the Alliance message spreads and takes hold, more and more troubled youngsters are being identified or are stepping forward voluntarily, asking for help in kicking a drug habit. Their teachers and their parents need to know where they can go to get that help. That is why Alliance communities are encouraged to work closely with treatment programs in their area, to invite program representatives into their schools to meet with and be available to the teachers, to the students and to their parents. We cannot expect to eliminate the demand for drugs unless we are prepared to meet the demand for recovery programs. Therefore, an important part of the Alliance commitment to local communities is our pledge to work closely with the Executive Office of Human Services and the Department of Public Health to ensure an adequate level of treatment services throughout the Commonwealth.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION: GOALGETTERS

Beginning this year, we will initiate a unique longitudinal study that will follow a group of 600 sixth-graders over five years to evaluate their changing attitudes and use of drugs and alcohol as they move into the critical junior and senior high school years. This is the most extensive in-depth survey ever undertaken in this country, to monitor ourselves, to learn what works best, and to constantly seek ways to do better. In addition, next year at this time and periodically thereafter, the Department of Public Health will replicate its statewide survey of junior and senior high school students and compare the results to the baseline data from the 1984 survey.

GOVERNMENT LEADERSHIP

To win the war against drugs, the Commonwealth's resources have to be energized and mobilized at the grass roots level. Elected officials can and must provide the leadership to get the ball rolling and shape the public agenda to ensure the availability of public resources. Ultimately, however, it is up to the people who live and work in a community to keep the ball rolling.

That is why the Alliance places so much emphasis on the early building blocks of a community coalition. Convening a truly representative community advisory council, drafting and disseminating school disciplinary codes and entering into a memorandum of understanding between police and school representatives--these are not only meaningful and necessary measures in their own right, but they provide a litmus test of the level of commitment within a given community.

To those communities prepared to make a real commitment, the Commonwealth offers:

- free teacher training provided by our regional prevention centers;
- grants to pay for substitute teachers while the teaching staff receive training;
- grants for the purchase of curriculum materials selected by the community;
- peer leadership seminars and institutes run by the prevention centers;
- a Speakers Bureau that communities can call to identify knowledgeable or experienced individuals to attend local meetings based on the nature of the audience and the purpose of the meeting;
- a newsletter to spread new ideas, to identify grant programs, and to announce special events;

- special daytime and evening programs, such as the K.I.D.S. Care program where recovering juvenile addicts address junior and senior high school classes or assemblies; and
- technical assistance to help local communities get organized, overcome institutional barriers, or develop programs tailored to their needs.

Moreover, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is prepared to commit a total of \$63 million in state and federal funds over the next five years toward the goal of drug-free schools. Today, there is at least \$1 million available in direct grants to Alliance communities to help implement local programs. Thanks to the foundation laid and lessons learned by the Alliance over the past two years, Massachusetts is also better positioned than any other state to distribute and take immediate advantage of the \$18 million a year we will be eligible to receive over the coming years under the drug abuse prevention and education bill emerging from Congress.

PRIVATE SECTOR LEADERSHIP

Every public and private institution in the Commonwealth has a stake in the war against drugs and a role in the Alliance. Not only does every employer lose when employees abuse drugs or alcohol, but today's youth are tomorrow's employers and employees. One of the most exciting developments of the past year or so has been the growing number of corporations and financial institutions who have become enthusiastic partners in the Alliance. Their contributions can be as varied as our private sector is diversified, but usually fall into one or more of the following four categories:

Substance Abuse Prevention Programs for Employees and Their Families:

We have begun to enlist major companies to take responsibility for helping their employees deal with drugs and alcohol in the workplace and in the home. These large employers have developed or are launching employee assistance programs that are not just available to those sufficiently motivated to seek them out, but that reach out to all their employees with information, guidance and counseling to help them understand and cope with their own substance abuse problems. These programs go a step further by addressing employees as parents too, by encouraging them to communicate with their children about drugs and alcohol and by sharing with them effective techniques for doing so. By 1990, our goal is to have in place business-based programs reaching at least one million Massachusetts employees.

Financial Assistance for Alliance Communities:

Businesses large and small can make a major contribution either by sponsoring local drug prevention programs in the community in which they are located or by pledging their support of the Alliance's Private Partnership Fund, all of which is distributed directly to Alliance communities. Already this year, generous contributions have raised the Fund to over a quarter of a million dollars--almost tripling last year's grant pool. By 1990, if we reach our goal, Massachusetts businesses will be able to point with pride to a Private Partnership Fund that will total \$2.5 million.

Celebrities and the Media: Getting Youngsters to Listen:

Celebrities--such as those our children see on television, listen to on the radio, or admire as professional athletes--and the media in general have a unique role to play in the Alliance. Through public service campaigns and special programs, they can reach more people with the message to stay drug-free. For instance, the Drugbusters program alone has already reached over 15,000 elementary school children and their parents throughout the Commonwealth. Because they are famous, celebrities can be particularly effective with young people by getting them to listen--perhaps for the first time--to the Alliance message. As powerful role models, theirs can be the single most inspirational voice in getting some young people to stay clear of drugs. And by actively promoting the drug-free challenge, celebrities lend credibility to a message young people are used to hearing from authority figures and make them more receptive to hearing that message in their homes and classrooms.

CONCLUSION

These are the building blocks. None can be neglected, all must succeed. Our goal is the same goal that parents all across this Commonwealth are praying for--drug-free schools. We owe our children nothing less than a commitment to work for drug-free schools by 1990. With this five-year plan, the Governor's Alliance is issuing a challenge to every community and to every community leader to join in this commitment and to seek out and help every school child in Massachusetts say no to drugs.

GOVERNOR'S ALLIANCE AGAINST DRUGS
 DRUG FREE SCHOOLS: A FIVE YEAR PLAN

| School Year | Past 2 Years | | 5 Year Plan | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|-------|--------------------------|-------|------------|-------|--------|
| | 84/85 | 85/86 | 86/87 | 87/88 | 88/89 | 89/90 | 90/91 |
| Member Communities | 50 | 203 | 325 | 351 | Monitoring | ----- | |
| K-12 Curriculum teacher training | 10% | 24% | 40% | 70% | 95% | 100% | -- |
| Discipline Codes | 10% | 30% | 70% | 100% | -- | -- | -- |
| Police/School Agreements | -- | 20% | 60% | 85% | 100% | -- | -- |
| Peer Programs | 5% | 25% | 40% | 70% | 95% | 100% | -- |
| Monitoring 600 Students | -- | -- | 6th | 7th | 8th | 9th | 10th |
| Employees/Parents | | | 200 thous. workers | 400 | 600 | 800 | 1 mil. |

